



GCTF

GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM FORUM

Plan of Action on Victims of Terrorism

During the 9-10 July 2012 GCTF High-Level Conference on Victims of Terrorism, GCTF members spoke about the need to further strengthen efforts to support victims of terrorism in all of its manifestation as well as associations of victims of terrorism. During the conference, a number of steps to advance this priority were identified. This action plan includes these and other concrete initiatives that could be led and/or sponsored by GCTF members and other interested stakeholders to achieve this objective. This list of initiatives is not intended to be exhaustive and GCTF members and other stakeholders are encouraged to pursue relevant initiatives not included herein. The GCTF's CVE Working Group may periodically review and update this plan to take into account relevant developments.

- **Training:**

1. Victim Support:

- Provide information to victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations about their legal rights and how to seek redress;
- Develop and offer guidance on providing psychological and other professional support to interested victims in the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks;
- Offer workshops exploring the opportunities for securing government/international resources and other support;
- Provide materials and resources on the formation of international and regional victims' networks and national associations of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations;
- Provide training, as appropriate under relevant national, state, and/or local laws, for criminal justice officials (including judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement officers, and forensic experts), first response operators, and reporters on protecting the rights of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and

- Compile testimonies from interested victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and from former extremists to serve as educational materials for at-risk audiences.
2. Help Ensure that the Voices of Victims Are Heard:
- Offer public relations and media awareness training to interested victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to help them to more effectively put forward counter-narratives to messages inciting violent extremism;
 - Offer interested victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations additional opportunities to learn how to use the full range of media and social-networking tools to give their messages to counter violent extremism, including, for example, how to build a website, create an effective YouTube video, speak to the press, blog, tweet, or create other tools for awareness; and
 - Encourage interested victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to work with other public and private entities involved in preventing violent extremism.
- **Communication with victims:** Establish mechanisms, where appropriate, that allow victims to participate fully in national criminal justice systems. When feasible, ensure that victims are informed of the progress of investigations into the incidents that affected them and inform victims of the progress of criminal justice proceedings. Encourage GCTF members and other countries, where consistent with the relevant legal framework, to fund the creation of country-specific public information materials (e.g. brochures, posters, websites, telephone hotlines) on the rights of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to ensure victims are made aware of national programs of benefit to them.
 - **Seed financing:** Encourage GCTF members and other countries to consider providing, where appropriate, assistance and possible financial support in forming victims' organizations and promoting their initiatives, to include psychological counseling.

- **Mentoring:** Create opportunities, as appropriate, for experienced victims' groups to mentor interested individuals and organizations that focus on multiple issues to learn about issues pertaining to victims of terrorism.
- **Good Practices:** Work with governments/relevant organizations to produce good-practice guides for engaging with interested victims and victims' organizations to develop and deliver victims' counter-narratives.
- **Networking:** Forge partnerships between governments and NGOs; networks of NGOs; and victims' groups and first responders.
- **Outreach:** Consider funding, where appropriate, periodic consultations, dialogues, or surveys with victims and victims' organizations to ascertain their needs and how they are changing.
- **Family:** Develop guidelines or initiate programs that train family members on how to best support victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Ensure that psychological and other support services are not limited to victims, but also extend to family members.

Many of these ideas could be pursued and/or implemented at the CVE Center of Excellence in Abu Dhabi. Concrete projects could be considered when proposed as a part of the working plan of the Center or through other GCTF Working Groups, as appropriate.